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SUBJECT: JERUSALEM MEDIA REACTION (11/05): PALESTINIANS ARE LEADERS
OF THEIR OWN FATE

Main Stories:

Al Quds and Al Ayyam lead with an almost identical red-font headline: "Unprecedented voter turnout places Obama at the White House gates." Al Quds runs a front page photo of Obama casting his vote, while Al Ayyam runs a front page photo of Obama supporters celebrating and smaller, inset photos of Obama and McCain both casting their ballots. Al Quds report says that the economy was a decisive factor for 62 percent of American voters. Al Hayat Al Jadeeda quotes Abbas telling the media in Hungary yesterday that he hopes the new U.S. president will achieve more success in efforts to achieve peace in the Middle East. "We wait for change and hope it can make peace possible," Abbas said. Abbas advisor Nimr Hamad denied alleged statements that Obama promised East Jerusalem to Abbas during Obama's visit to Ramallah. Al Quds reports on an AFP story that Hamas chief Khaled Misha'al has said Hamas is ready for dialogue with the new U.S. President. Israel's PM Olmert is also to Israel.

Al Quds reports that Egypt has informed Hamas that Egypt's proposal for a Palestinian dialogue is a general outline and that any proposed amendments should be raised within the specialized committees. The report also states that Fatah agreed to a bilateral meeting with Hamas only after the inauguration of the official talks in Cairo. Al Quds quotes Assistant Arab League Secretary General Mohammed Sbaih calling for the inclusion of Hamas in the PLO and noting there is Arab consensus on supporting Egypt's efforts to achieve Palestinian unity. The paper also quotes Sbaih saying that the American Congress should be clear that the Arab countries will not allow Israel to change the Arab Islamic character of Jerusalem.

Al Quds and Al Hayat Al Jadeeda report on their front pages that six

Hamas Al-Qassam Brigade activists were killed on Tuesday evening by Israeli fire in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip and in Juhr Ad-Dik in the central Gaza Strip. The report also notes that Egypt opened the Rafah border crossing with Gaza and that it will remain open through Thursday.

Al Quds highlights Prime Minister Fayyad's visit to Hebron to participate in a campaign calling for an end to Israel's closure of the old city. Fayyad called for the Palestinian people to show solidarity with Hebron in light of escalating Israeli settler attacks there. Fayyad is also quoted saying that the PA is committed to ensuring security for its citizens.

Al Quds and Al Ayyam report on their front pages that the Fatah bloc won Hamas-boycotted An-Najah student elections, adding that the Fatah bloc won 58 senate seats, followed by a bloc of leftist Palestinian parties' with 10 seats. The Leftist bloc represented both the Popular and Democratic Fronts for the Liberation of Palestine, as well as the People's Party. Islamic Jihad gained eight seats, the Palestinian National Initiative took three and the FIDA bloc gained two. Hamas's student bloc boycotted the election in response to an alleged PA arrest campaign, which the PA denied.

Al Hayat Al Jadeeda reports on its front page that the Israeli High Court is looking into a Palestinian appeal to change the route of the separation wall that takes away 27000 dunums of Palestinian land between Tulkarem and Qalqiliya in northern West Bank.

Al Hayat Al Jadeeda reports that Israel is concerned about a possible show-down with Britain over settlements in the West Bank in

JERUSALEM 00001998 002 OF 002

light of British pressure to prevent EU tax exemptions on EU imports of Israeli settlement products. Al Quds quotes British Foreign Office officials saying that the Israeli settlements are "illegal and an obstacle to peace."

On an inside page, Al Quds reports that Michael Schreuder from the U.S. Consulate General Economic Section at visited the Expotech exhibit in Ramallah and tested the technology present by making a call to his family in the US using VoIp technology. He is quoted expressing the Consulate's readiness to enhance networking between Palestinian and American technology and telecommunications companies.

BLOCK QUOTES:

1) Al Quds ran an editorial under the title "No...we haven't forgotten that wicked promise" that argues "It's a pity that the Arab nation, with all its resources and capabilities still waits for the White House and its resident to draft its future and set the policies of its states. The question is when would this nation turn into a doer instead of being satisfied with passiveness, monitoring events and accepting the actions of others and being affected by their decisions?"

2) Regular columnist Hani Habeen opines in Al Ayyam under the title "A new American President: He... and us" that "it would be a mistake to interpret the American vision of the new president based on intentions, statements or even actions by that president as an unavoidable destiny. We believe ... that it is up to us as Arabs and Palestinians to affect the American stand, if we successfully used the many tools that we have, ... only then we can force the American President to take the stand that is the least hostile towards pressuring Israel to reach a just solution. Otherwise, any American President, whoever he might be, won't take the Arab stand into consideration, and Israel shall remain the pilot and minaret for his policies".

3) The Palestine Chronicle editor Ramzy Baroud writes in Ma'an under the title "A Third Palestinian Intifada in the Making" that "Palestinian uprisings are often a collective response to hard questions. Chances are that the next Intifada - as there will surely be one as long as the occupation continues - will once again find a

popular rejection of the ills which have afflicted the Palestinian cause. It would once again reassert the relevance, if not the leading role of the Palestinian people as the real owners of their fate, and guardians of their own struggle."

Walles